

About Lead-Based Paint

- Lead-based paint was used in homes before 1978, and extensively in homes built before 1950
- It was primarily applied to windows, doors, stairs, railings, columns, porches, siding and trim
- Removing or disturbing paint that contains lead could be the most hazardous part of painting or home improvement project

For more information about lead poisoning, call 1-877-DCA-LEAD.



Disclaimer: The guidance offered in this document is based upon the latest lead hazard control knowledge and technology available at the time it was written. Users bear all risks associated with reliance on these work practices and have sole responsibility to form their own independent judgment on the document's use, modification, adaptation as appropriate. Neither the New Jersey State Government nor any of its employees makes any warrant, expressed or implied, or assumes any legal liability for any use of, or the results of, any information, product or process discussed in this document.

Greetings from Acting Governor Codey and Commissioner Levin

Part of being a homeowner is making home improvements, including painting or replacing windows. Home improvements show your pride as a homeowner, create better living space and increase the value of your home. But whether you do the job yourself or hire a professional, there are important safety issues to consider before starting the job – especially concerning lead-based paint.

That is why the Department of Community Affairs' (DCA's) Lead-Based Paint Hazard Control Program has produced this brochure. We hope it will help ensure that, when you do home improvement projects involving lead-based paint, you are as safe and protected as possible.

This brochure takes you through a project – start to finish. From prepping to cleaning up, these simple steps are great tips on how to work safely and cleanly with lead.

We also encourage you to review other lead-based paint literature provided by DCA to ensure a consolidated effort in protecting New Jersey's families from lead poisoning.

With regards,

Richard J. Codey
Richard J. Codey
Acting Governor

Susan Bass Levin
Susan Bass Levin
Commissioner



DCA's Division of Community Resources is committed to building neighborhoods. Working with nonprofit organizations, municipalities, private developers and the NJ Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (HMFA), the Division is responsible for grant and loan programs that promote economic and community development through housing and other support services.

The Division's Lead-Based Paint Hazard Control Program is dedicated to providing lead poisoning information to occupants of housing assisted with DCA funds and is funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

For more information about lead poisoning, call 1-877-DCA-LEAD.

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Richard J. Codey
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Susan Bass Levin
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Working Safely With Lead: A Guide to Lead-Safe Practices for Painting and Home Improvement Jobs



NJ Department of Community Affairs
Lead-Based Paint
Hazard Control Program

State of New Jersey
Richard J. Codey
Acting Governor

Department of Community Affairs
Susan Bass Levin
Commissioner

Getting Ready!

The only way to be sure your home has lead-based paint is to have the paint tested by a state-certified lead evaluation contractor or have a paint chip sample analyzed by an environmental lab.

Before beginning a home improvement or repair project, be sure to inspect your home for possible problems that can affect painted surfaces. Inspect the room you are working in to determine the cause of any peeling or chipping paint, especially sources of moisture.

- Look for:
- Leaky radiator valves
 - Leaks around window openings caused by missing exterior caulking or flashing
 - Plumbing leaks in rooms above or adjacent to the project area
 - Leaking roofs, creating water damage on ceiling and walls, especially along exterior walls

Getting Set!

- Keep children and pregnant women away from the work area
- Work on one room at a time
- Remove rugs and as much furniture as possible from your work area
- Cover all remaining furniture with 6 mil plastic, taped securely in place
- Close off the work area by taping 6 mil plastic over all doors, windows, floors, ground and other exposed surfaces
- Turn off forced-air heating or air conditioning systems and cover vents with 6 mil plastic, taped firmly in place
- Do not use fans in the work area
- Be careful not to track dust out of the work area
- Do not eat, drink or smoke in the work area
- Use a plant mister to wet work surfaces before hand scraping and sanding. Additionally, if you use drop cloths to protect the floor, be sure to mist them before rolling up for disposal
- Only workers should be allowed in the work area until the job is complete

Working Safely with Lead
Tips for Lead-Safe Practices for Painting and Home Improvement Jobs

Cleaning Up

Working Outside

- Close all windows and doors, including neighboring windows or any other openings within 20 feet of your work area
- Place 6 mil plastic on the ground, taped firmly to the house’s foundation
- Cover plants and flowers with 6 mil plastic, taped firmly in place
- Do not work in the rain or wind
- Do not place ladders directly on the plastic, or it may slip
- Move all outside furniture, playground equipment, sandboxes, toys, barbecue grills, etc. at least 20 feet away from your work area. If you cannot remove them, they should be covered with 6 mil plastic, taped firmly in place.

Using the Right Tools

You may already have some of these in your home, so do a quick inventory before you go shopping!

- You should use:
- Protective clothing, like safety glasses, disposable gloves, hat, shoe covers, etc.
 - Duct tape
 - 6 mil plastic drop cloths
 - A mop and three buckets
 - All purpose cleaner or a cleaner specified for lead clean up
 - Spray bottles /plant misters
 - Heavy duty plastic bags
 - Disposable rags or paper towels
 - High Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) vacuum (Call 1-877-DCA-LEAD to get information about renting or buying a HEPA vacuum.)

Working Lead Safe

Safely taking off lead-based paint is a time-consuming process. You should take it off slowly and use methods that create the least amount of dust. Some tips include:

- Don’t dry scrape - always wet surfaces before scraping
- Don’t sandblast or power wash
- Don’t use an open flame or torch-burn the paint
- Do use chemical strippers, but none containing methylene chloride
- Do use heat guns, but not those that operate at more than 1,100°F
- Do buy a HEPA vacuum that can be safely used where there is leaded dust

Always clean up at the end of each workday.

- Change work clothes and shoes before leaving the work area
- Wash hands and face immediately after leaving the work area
- Shower and wash hair as soon as possible after work/cleanup is complete
- Wash work clothes separately from other family laundry



Make sure you do a thorough, final clean up of the work area.

- Place all dust and chips in double garbage bags
- Vacuum walls, floors and wall-to-wall carpeting with a HEPA filter-equipped vacuum cleaner
- Carefully roll or fold 6 mil plastic drop cloths inward (keeping the dust from flying around) and discard in double garbage bags
- Use three buckets for cleaning – one with cleanser and water, one with clean rinse water and a third to wring out your mop. Change rinse water often.
- Wash floors, walls, etc. with an all-purpose cleaner and disposable rags or paper towels, then rinse well. Change rinse water often.
- Clean all tools
- Dispose of towels in plastic garbage bags
- Never burn leaded debris

Make sure you test for lead dust when the job is finished!

- Consider hiring a professional to test areas for lead dust contamination after your final cleanup
- Call your local health department, housing or community development office, or 1-877-DCA-LEAD for information on lead evaluation firms

